CHAPTER XXIV

INAUGURATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE PHILIPPINES

HIS EXCELLENCY, MANUEL L. QUEZON, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE PHILIPPINES *

THE Province of Tayabas occupies a long thin strip of land in the central part of the Island of Luzon. The most northerly town on the eastern coast of the province is Baler. Not only is the town remote and nearly inaccessible, but it is small. Since the heroic stand of the Spanish garrison during the Philippine Revolution, Baler's one claim to fame has been that it is the birthplace of Manuel Luis Quezon, President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines.

Manuel L. Quezon (for the middle given name is omitted by him) was born on August 19, 1878. His father, who was a village teacher, early discerned the promise in the boy and made every possible sacrifice so that he could secure an education. With such assistance as his father could furnish and by working at menial tasks himself, Manuel was able to graduate from the San Juan de Letran College in Manila and was enrolled in the law course of the University of Santo Tomas when hostilities between the American and Filipino forces started. Thereupon young Quezon joined the Filipino Army and took part in the war. On being apprehended by the United States Army, Major Quezon (for that was his

rank) was im-
prisoned for six months.
After being released from confinement,
Quezon passed

[1] Section read by Hon. Maximo Rodriguez, Governor of Tayabas. See President Quezon's newspaper articles published in July, 1933, in answer to the charges of his critics, in the nature of an autobiography.